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TURKISH ART

OF THE OTTOMAN PERIOD

EXHIBITION CATALOGUE OF
TURKISH ART
OF THE OTTOMAN PERIOD

BY
ESIN ATIL

FREER GALLERY OF ART

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION
WASHINGTON, D.C.
1973

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COVER : Detail of mid - 16th century Iznik plate See No. 18

PRINTED IN TURKEY BY AJANS -TÜRK PRINTING AND PUBLISHING CO.

Throughout this year the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Republic of Turkey is being commemorated with special programs devoted not only to the political and social achievements since 1923 but also to the great heritage of the Turkish people whose cultural history spans many centuries.

It is fitting that the Freer Gallery of Art, whose collection of Turkish art is renowned for its superior quality and scope, is playing a leading role in the celebration of this event.

This outstanding institution is contributing to the understanding and appreciation of the artistic traditions of Turkey by arranging an exhibition of Turkish arts from the Ottoman period and by publishing an extensive catalogue of the objects on display.

I congratulate the Freer Gallery of Art on its exhibition and publication, and for presenting the highlights of our civilization to the American people.

Melih Esenbel
Ambassador of Turkey

İmza

FOREWORD

This year, the Freer Gallery of Art celebrates its fiftieth anniversary, and it is auspicious indeed that this Jubilee is shared with the Republic of Turkey. On October 29 of 1923, Mustafa Kemal Atatürk became President of that nation, and a new era was opened. We salute the achievements of this great people who, throughout history, have played an important role in the cultural interchange between the East and the West. At the Freer Gallery of Art we feel fortunate to be the custodians of a small selection of treasures from Turkey's past which reveals the skill and competence of its craftsmen and the creative genius of Ottoman design. These objects, which are eternal ambassadors, welcome people of all nations, color and creed and testify that, in art, there is peace and harmony. They strengthen the bonds of friendship between our two nations and tell us that the glory of Turkey and its heritage shall endure.

Harold P. Stern
Director
Freer Gallery of Art

INTRODUCTION

The Turks, whose original homeland was between the Altai and Ural Mountains, have an ancient cultural history. They are related to the Huns who divided into two major groups and started migrating around the first century A.D.: the Western Huns crossed Europe and reached the English Channel under Atilla while the Asiatic Huns remained in the East.

A branch of the latter group, the Gök Turks, evolved about the third century A.D. and controlled the vast territory from Manchuria to the Black Sea, touching upon the borders of the Byzantine and Sasanian Empires. It is from these people that we possess the oldest written documents in Turkish history, the eighth-century Orkhon inscriptions.

The Gök Turks were eventually overthrown by the Uighurs, who also descended from the Asiatic Huns and settled in eastern Turkestan. The remarkable mural paintings from the cities of Khocho, Kizil, Turfan and Bezeklik, and the manuscript illustrations from the eighth and ninth centuries are the most outstanding contributions of their brilliant culture and the earliest extant works of art pertaining to the Turkish peoples.

The Turks started to infiltrate the Islamic world during the second half of the eighth century, entering the services of the Abbasid caliphs in Baghdad and Samarra. In time, several enterprising members rose to power and became provincial governors, some of whom established short-lived dynasties such as the Tulunids (868-905) and Ikhshidids (935-969) of Egypt and Syria.

Other groups arriving from Central Asia settled in the eastern provinces of the Islamic world and founded independent states. Among these were the Karakhanids (992-1211) of Transoxiana and eastern Turkestan; and the Ghaznavids (977-1186) of Khorasan, Afghanistan, and northern India. Sultan Mahmud of the Ghaznavids patronized the creation of the greatest Islamic epic of all times, the **Shahname** of Firdausi, which was dedicated to him in A.D. 999.

The arrival of the Seljuks towards the end of the tenth century changed the course of events in the Near East. The Seljuks, descendants of a tribe called the Oghuz Turks, a branch of the Gök Turks, moved into the Islamic world from the steppes north of the Caspian and Aral Seas. Under the leadership of Tughrul Bey they defeated one ruler after another and within a few years took such major cities as Merv, Nishapur, Isfahan and Rayy. In 1055, Tughrul Bey entered Baghdad and the title of sultan was conferred upon him by the caliph.

During the reign of Alp Arslan and his son Malik Shah, and with the aid of a most capable vizier, Nizam al-Mulk, the Seljuks reached the height of their political power. Called the Great Seljuks (1038-1194) to distinguish them from those who eventually ruled Anatolia, their influence extended from Khwarazm, Afghanistan, and Transoxiana in the east to the Caucasus in the west, incorporating Persia, Iraq and Syria and penetrating into the Arabian Peninsula. The defeat of the Byzantine Emperor Romanos Diogenes at the Battle of Malazgirt (Manzikert) by Alp Arslan in 1071 opened Asia Minor, allowing it to be settled by the newly arriving Turkish tribes, and leading ultimately to the Turkification of Anatolia.

Following the death of Malik Shah in 1092, internal and external strife began to undermine the strength of the dynasty and several members of the Seljuk family established independent states in Iraq and Khorasan, in Syria,

Kirman, and Anatolia. In time, the local Atabeks, Turkish commanders appointed as tutors and guardians to the Seljuk princes sent to serve as governors in the provinces, obtained control of those regions, and the rule of the Near East slipped from the hands of the Great Seljuks.

After the defeat of the Byzantines, Süleyman bin Kutulmuş was sent to set up the Anatolian branch of the family which was to be the longest surviving line of the Seljuks. His dynasty, called the Seljuks of Rum, ruled Anatolia for almost two and a half centuries (1077-1307).

The thirteenth century was the most brilliant period of the dynasty. During the reign of Alaettin Keykubad (1219-37) there were tremendous building activities supported by the royal family and the ministers of state. Following the Mongol conquest of the Near East, the Seljuks of Rum could not retain their original strength and by A.D. 1300 Anatolia was divided among several Turkish emirates.

One of the emirates on the northwestern corner of Anatolia, centered around Söğüt, was governed by Osman (1299-1326). The family belonged to the Oghuz tribe, as had the Seljuks, and had migrated from the East together with other Turkish clans following the victory of Malazgirt. Settling in the ancient province of Bithynia, the House of Osman, called the Ottomans, confronted the Byzantine Empire.

As the eastern regions of Anatolia were already controlled by other Turkish tribes, the Ottomans had no alternative but to expand westward, along the Aegean and across the straits of Gallipoli into the Balkans. With their superb military organization, and with the aid of fresh manpower attracted by their expansionist movements, the Ottomans soon became the most powerful group in Anatolia, capturing one Christian center after another until the Byzantine Empire had been reduced to the city of Constantinople.

In 1326 Osman's son, Orhan (1326-59), took Bursa which was chosen as his capital; in 1331 Iznik (Nicaea) and in 1337 Izmit (Nicomedia) fell; in 1354 Gallipoli was crossed, opening Thrace and the Balkans to the Ottoman conquest. Murad I (1359-89) captured Edirne (Adrianopolis) in 1365 and moved the capital there from Bursa. Under this sultan, Thrace was incorporated into the Ottoman Empire as well as Bulgaria and Serbia. Murad's son, Bayezid I (1389-1405), was involved both on the eastern and western fronts, laying the first siege of Constantinople in 1394.

The rapid expansion of the Ottomans was interrupted by the arrival of Timur (Tamerlane) from the East. Although defeated in 1402 and torn by internal wars among the heirs of Bayezid I, the Ottomans were soon united under Mehmed I (1413-21) who reestablished internal organization and renewed his sovereignty over the regions taken by his forefathers. With the next sultan, Murad II (1421-51), territorial expansion was resumed; in 1422 Constantinople was placed under siege for the second time and the western frontier of the empire reached the Danube.

With the accession of Mehmed II (1451-81) a new era began in Ottoman history. Under the leadership of this young and energetic sultan, superbly trained in military and administrative spheres, the Ottoman army finally entered Constantinople in 1453. Then Mehmed II undertook systematic campaigns to form a protective ring around his new capital, now called Istanbul. In the west, the Ottomans extended up to Belgrade and landed their forces at Otranto; in the north, Trabzon (Trebizond), the last Christian empire, fell

while the Crimea and the southern shores of the Black Sea were added to their domain; in the east they defeated the Turkmans and in the south repelled the Mameluks of Egypt and Syria, controlling almost all of Anatolia.

The extension of the frontiers continued with each sultan. Selim I (1512-20) took Azerbaijan from the Safavids of Persia; he defeated the Mameluks and gained control of the entire Near East including Syria, Egypt, and the Arabian Peninsula. His famous son, Süleyman the Magnificent (1520-66), turned to the west and with the capture of Rhodes and the northern shores of Africa, the Mediterranean became an Ottoman sea. The conquest of Belgrade opened the way for Vienna which was besieged by the Ottoman army in 1529. Expanding on all fronts, the seas around the empire (the Black Sea, the Mediterranean, and the Red Sea) were controlled by the Ottoman navy and the army won victories against the neighboring Safavids in the east and the Holy Roman Empire in the west.

The great political expansion which reached its zenith at the end of the sixteenth century began to lose momentum by the middle of the seventeenth. Long wars with the joint European powers on all fronts, internal strife and incompetent rulers weakened the strength of the empire. Although there were occasional moments which recalled the greatness of the past, such as the reign of Murad IV (1623-40), the capable administration of the Köprülü ministers in the second half of the seventeenth century, the second siege of Vienna in 1683, and the glittering Tulip Period during the first quarter of the eighteenth century, the impetus of the drive that characterized the sixteenth century could not be recaptured.

During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the frontiers shrank in spite of the reforms attempted by such unique sultans as Selim III and Mahmud II. With the strengthening of European powers, both politically and economically, and the growth of nationalism, the Ottoman Empire in Europe was reduced to Thrace alone at the beginning of the twentieth century and participation in World War II led to the loss of the Arab provinces. When the European powers started to make claims on Anatolia, the heart of Turkish domains, the Turks rose under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk and reaffirmed their independence on the land that had belonged to them for almost a millenium. In 1923 Turkey entered a new age, that of a modern republic, with Atatürk as its first president.

The Turks, whose history spans centuries, founded many states which controlled the regions extending from Inner Asia to Europe. Even though almost all of the great empires of the Near East and Central Asia can be traced to Turkish ethnic origins, for the sake of clarity, terms such as the Mameluks, Timurids, and Mughals should be used as each group incorporated their traditions with those of local origin and developed integrated styles which are best defined by their dynastic names.

Under the patronage of the Ottomans, certain indigenous and characteristic features evolved which can only be identified with Ottoman art. It is this tradition which is the most spectacular and representative in Turkish cultural history and one which continues to survive in the art and architecture of Turkey today.

Evolving from a small clan on the western fringes of the Islamic world and growing into the most powerful empire ruled by a single dynasty, the Ottomans became avid builders and art patrons.

The Bursa and Edirne periods with their unique architecture and decoration reveal the earliest evidences of Ottoman creative talents. Although little remains of the portable objects made prior to the conquest of Istanbul, the appearance of ceramics in the fourteenth century, both as tiles and as pottery, coincides with the first years of the empire.

Under Mehmed II, Istanbul became the administrative and cultural capital of the empire, incorporating the political and intellectual elite of the Ottoman world. The building of the Topkapi Palace and various structural complexes which unite mosques, medresses, tombs, khans, imarets, hospitals and libraries changed not only the sociological life of the city but also its physical outlook with slender minarets rising amidst the voluptuous domes that dominate the horizon.

Istanbul's magnificent buildings, rich bazaars and vibrant cultural life attracted so many people that toward the end of the sixteenth century it was the largest city in Europe. Each reigning sultan enthusiastically supported the arts with the imperial studios in the capital employing the best talents of the empire. The court was the gathering place of all famous musicians, poets, historians, philosophers and theologians.

The capital and the provincial centers were adorned with monumental structures created by the genius of Turkish architects. The pottery kilns of Iznik produced exquisite works. The painting studio in Istanbul executed scores of illustrated volumes on religion, literature, history and science as well as biographical works on the lives of the sultans.

The Topkapi Palace, residence of the imperial family, possesses the largest collection of Ottoman art. The buildings themselves are of artistic value as numerous sections and pavilions were added during each reign. The sultans were collectors as well as patrons of the arts and meticulous records were kept listing the new additions to the Imperial Treasury. These records, together with payroll registers indicating the salary and status of the artists employed by the Palace, provide us with the information necessary to reconstruct the administration and scope of the royal workshops.

The imperial collection grew with the incorporation of new works commissioned by the sultans, gifts received from both foreign governments and local dignitaries, booty taken during campaigns and individual purchases. The kitchens housed a vast collection of Far Eastern porcelain, most of which are of Chinese origin. The acquisition of Oriental ceramics began during the reign of Mehmed II and in time the collection grew to number over ten thousand items.

The imperial libraries possessed thousands of volumes among which there were Christian manuscripts dating from the twelfth century as well as Renaissance and Baroque drawings and prints. The largest foreign collection is that of Persian miniatures which, together with Persian artists working in the painting studio, influenced the course of Ottoman painting.

The impact of Eastern and Western influences can be easily observed during the early phases of Ottoman art, but soon these diversified features were fused together to create a homogeneous tradition. Responding to the needs of the state and to the demands of the sultans, the artists formulated unique styles and themes which absorbed the external idioms into their own artistic vocabulary by the middle of the sixteenth century.

MANUSCRIPTS

Aside from architecture, which is beyond the scope of this study, the greatest contribution of Ottoman art is in the fields of manuscript painting and ceramics. Ottoman ceramics, mass-produced to supply both local and foreign markets, enjoyed the widest circulation and the highest reputation of all portable Turkish objects. By contrast, illustrated manuscripts were zealously guarded in the Palace libraries throughout Ottoman history and only a meager amount were given away as presents, captured during battles or, as in the past century, sold or taken from the imperial collections. Consequently, limited quantities of miniatures were accessible to the outsiders. With the advent of the Republic all the imperial libraries became public museums, enabling students and scholars to study this unique form of Ottoman art.

The art of the book is basically an Islamic tradition with court-sponsored poets, calligraphers, illuminators, miniaturists and bookbinders working together to create an illustrated manuscript.

During the first great period of painting in the Near East, from the late twelfth century to the middle of the thirteenth, numerous books were executed in Iraq and Syria, more specifically in the schools of Baghdad and Mosul. Miniatures adorned manuscripts on astronomy (al-Sufi's thesis on the fixed stars, the **Kitab Suwar al-Kawakib**) scientific works (the **Materia Medica** of Dioscorides on the medical value of plants and the **Kitab al-Diryaq** of Galen on the antidotes for poison), mechanical devices (the **Automata** of al-Jazari), usefulness of animals (the **Kitab al-Baytara**, **Manafi al-Hayawan** and **Kitab al-Hayawan**) and literary subjects (the **Makamat** of al-Harari) and the **Kitab al-Aghani**).

Only one work, the **Varka and Gulshah** (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 841) can be assigned to Anatolia as its calligrapher, Muhammed al-Khoyi, was traced to a family who had settled in Konya.

In the Ottoman world, the production of illustrated manuscripts was under the rigid control of the sultans. An author was selected from the court school to write on a given theme and after his draft had been approved, calligraphers and miniaturists submitted samples of their work, the best among them being chosen to execute the book. Therefore, each manuscript was the joint product of the various talents employed by the studio and, more often than not, several painters worked on the execution of a single image, making it almost impossible to distinguish their individual styles.

The Early Period

The earliest illustrated Ottoman manuscript is the **Iskendername** of Ahmedi (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, suppl. turc 309, dated 1416) which is based on the works of Firdausi and Nizami with the same title. Of the twenty miniatures in this volume only three are contemporary with the manuscript; the remaining images were taken from fourteenth-century Persian works and pasted into the book.

The next oldest manuscript is the **Dilsizname** of Badi al-Din al-Tabrizi (Oxford, Bodleian Library, MS Ouseley 133, dated 1455-56), made in Edirne

during the reign of Mehmed II (1451-81). Although repetitive and simple compositions are used, the images were specifically created for this work. The only other illustrated manuscript from the sultanate of Mehmed II is the **Cerrahiye-i Ilkhaniye** of Sharaf al-Din (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, suppl. turc 693, dated 1465), possibly executed in Amasya where the author wrote his thesis on Ilkhanid surgery. Profusely adorned with scenes related to various treatments specified by the author, it is the first attempt to illustrate this text.

The above manuscripts reveal an experimentation in using miniatures to enhance the book. They are sporadic achievements, each being painted by a single hand, and they are unique since no previously illustrated versions of these texts existed to guide the painters. The place of execution of each work differs, indicating that a central royal atelier was not yet established. The fact that each manuscript is unique also suggests that the imperial libraries did not have extensive representational material and that sufficient prototypes were not available to the painters.

Several years after the conquest of Istanbul, Mehmed II organized the administrative system of the state and founded the court schools. It seems likely that the **nakkaşhane**, imperial painting studio, started at the time and was in full operation during the last quarter of the fifteenth century.

Mehmed II, a highly educated Sultan who was very much interested in Western cultures, invited several European painters to his capital. The two Italians known to have worked in Istanbul are Costanza de Ferrara and Gentile Bellini. Costanza was at the court around 1478-81 and executed a portrait of Mehmed II (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 2153, fol. 145b). Bellini, whose visit coincided with that of Costanza, was in Istanbul between 1479 and 1481. A portrait of Sultan Mehmed II, signed by this painter and dated November 25, 1481 is now in the National Gallery of London. There also exist several drawings and paintings of Ottoman scenes and subjects which are either attributed to Bellini or are copies made by his followers.

Of greater significance are the portraits made by the local artists who were influenced by the works of the Italians, such as the two representations of Mehmed II in the Istanbul albums (Topkapi Palace Museum, B 408, fol. 15b and H 2153, fol. 10a). The painting in the Freer Gallery of Art is perhaps the most interesting work of this period (pl. 3). Copying a portrait of a scribe made by a European (Boston, Isabella Gardner Museum) the Ottoman artist has changed a few details and transformed his subject into a painter, depicting him working on a miniature. The exceptionally high technical quality of this image is indicative of the standards of the **nakkaşhane** in the last quarter of the fifteenth century.

These portraits are the first products of the Istanbul studio. There is also an album containing sketches of decorative motifs, drafts of poetry and dedications to Mehmed II (Istanbul University Library, F 1423). The designs in this album are also found on the pottery, tiles, manuscript illumination, woodwork, stucco and textiles of the period indicating that by the 1480s the **nakkaşhane** had begun to supply the ornamental themes to be employed on various works of art within the empire. The centralization of the decorative vocabulary and the prominent role played by the royal studio will be very significant throughout the history of Ottoman art.

With the accession of Bayezid II (1481-1512) the painting studio turned eastward, its future determined by the influence of Persian and Turkman artists working in the **nakkashane**. The Western orientation attempted by his father, Mehmed II, had not taken root and Ottoman painting became an integral part of the Islamic tradition with a predominant emphasis on book illustration, in contrast to independent images in the European genre.

Under the patronage of Bayezid II, an Ottoman sultan far more concerned with the East than with the West, over a dozen illustrated manuscripts were produced in which the features of Timurid, Turkman and Safavid miniatures of Herat, Tabriz and Shiraz are easily identifiable.

Coexisting with the Eastern traditions is a most original style which was created by the local artists of the studio. Using native architectural features with domes resting on pendentives, arched openings, tiled interiors, cantilevered balconies and chambers, and contemporary costumes, we see the painters observing and depicting the elements of their immediate environment. The interest in representing local scenes with actual personages will eventually lead to the development of the historiographical style which is the most characteristic feature of Ottoman painting.

Archival documents support the extensive activity of the **nakkashane**. Among the forty-one masters and apprentices listed in the oldest register of court painters, dated prior to 1525, ten artists are mentioned as having been employed by Bayezid II. Other documents, pertaining to additional payments given to the court artists and recording those who presented gifts to the sultan, provide several additional names. Compiling the entries from the first quarter of the sixteenth century we find at least seventeen painters working in the **nakkashane**. Some are mentioned as belonging to a family of artists, following their father's profession; others are called "Acem" indicating that they were of foreign descent or have "al-Tabrizi" attached to their names, designating their place of origin. One name stands out, Hasan bin Abdülcélil who was the **nakkaşbaşı** in charge of the **nakkashane** from 1510 to 1536, through the reigns of Bayezid II, Selim I, and Süleyman the Magnificent. Unfortunately, since none of the extant paintings are signed, the works of the individual artists given in the registers cannot be identified.

The earliest dated manuscript executed during the reign of Bayezid II is the **Kalila and Dimna** (Bombay, Prince of Wales Museum, no. 51. 34, dated 1495) whose seven miniatures reveal the eclecticism of this period. A similar mixture of elements also exists in the **Khamisa** of Amir Khosrow Dihlawi (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 799, dated 1498) in which the late Herat style is combined with the newly developing Ottoman genre. This genre is particularly visible in the architectural settings of the seven scenes of the Bahram Gur cycle with high domes, arcades and elaborate buttresses which provide the images with a fantastic sense of perspective. Similar structures appear in other contemporary manuscripts such as the **Khosrow and Shirin** of Hatifi (New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, no. 69.27, dated 1498-99), the **Khosrow and Shirin** of Sheykhi (Uppsala University Library, Vet. 86, dated 1499) and the **Süleymanname** of Uzun Firdausi (Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, no. 406).

Contemporaneous with the products of local painters are several manuscripts executed purely in the late fifteenth-century Turkman style of Shiraz.

Among these are the **Iskendername** of Ahmedi (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 679, dated 1500) and the **Mantik al-Tayr** of Attar (Topkapi Palace Museum, EH 1512, dated 1515). The latter work falls within the reign of Selim I (1512-20) and is the only extant manuscript from his short sultanate. Ironically, Selim I was responsible for the importation of several painters from Tabriz following his victorious defeat of the Safavids in 1514. The register of court painters lists sixteen artists brought to the **nakkaşhane** by Selim I.

The most significant aspect of early Ottoman painting is its eclectic style consisting of Western influences instigated by Mehmed II on one extreme, a strong Eastern impact encouraged by Bayezid II and Selim I on the other, and above all, the unique attempts of local artists.

The Transitional Period

The reign of Süleyman the Magnificent (1520-66), the golden age of Ottoman political conquest, was also the period of great manuscript productivity with an abundance of illustrated literary works. However, the most significant feature of this period is the appearance of an original Ottoman genre, historiography, which in time will dominate the activities of the **nakkaşhane**.

The influence of artists from Tabriz is quite prominent in this period, particularly in the meticulously detailed drawings produced by both the newcomers to the **nakkaşhane** and by their Turkish colleagues and apprentices (e.g. pls. 4 - 6). The painting tradition of Shiraz is also observed along with select European trends. The registers of the **nakkaşhane** prove that a group of artists of mixed backgrounds worked together on the execution of the manuscripts. The incorporation of both Western and Eastern painters into the **nakkaşhane** parallels the growth of the empire which extended its frontiers on all directions. Foreign artists, either taken as booty or coming voluntarily for employment in the capital, brought their native traditions with them. The increase in the acquisition of Islamic manuscripts in the imperial libraries also provided additional material which could be utilized by the painting studio.

The much quoted payroll register of 1545 divides the artists into Rum and Acem; the former consists of twenty-four masters and twenty apprentices whereas the latter records eleven masters and four apprentices. A later document, dated 1558, lists twenty-six Rum and nine Acem painters with four apprentices. Some of the artists are recorded as being from Bosnia, Albania, Hungary, Austria, Moldavia, Georgia, and Circassia as well as coming from Tabriz and Isfahan; there is even a listing of a Frank (European). The distinction between Rum and Acem is not very clear as the Europeans and Persians are listed in both sections. Acem, which means a foreigner as well as a novice and recruit, possibly refers to those who were newly incorporated into the studio while Rum pertains to the older and established residents of the **nakkaşhane**.

The conglomeration of such diverse talents can be seen in close to twenty literary manuscripts which date from the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent. Their paintings, which integrate Western and Persian features with those of local origin, illustrate several copies of the **Khamse** of Ali Shir Newai, the **Haft Awrang** of Jami, the **Guy and Chogan** of Arifi, translations of the

Shahname of Firdausi, the **Khosrow and Shirin** of Sheyhi and various anthologies of Shahi, Fani, Khojandi, and Newai whose dates fall between the 1530s and the 1540s.

In contrast to the wealth of literary manuscripts there exists a limited group whose texts were specifically written to document contemporary events. These manuscripts, which are the most important works of the period and the products of local talents, reveal a style that is uniquely Ottoman. Devoted to the specific events within the reign of a sultan and illustrating the regions conquered with cartographic accuracy, the genre of historical manuscripts makes its appearance around 1520 with the **Selimname** (Topkapı Palace Museum, H 1597-98) which narrates and illustrates the life of Sultan Selim I. The sixteen miniatures in the **Selimname** still show the strong impact of the Turkman style, but with the depiction of specific Ottoman costumes and the employment of contemporary events, it represents a new tradition in both literature and painting.

A related work of the period is the **Kitab-i Bahriye** (Topkapı Palace Museum, H 642, dated 1525-26) by Piri Reis, the great admiral who is best known for his map of the Americas. The **Kitab-i Bahriye**, which depicts the ports of the Mediterranean, resembles an atlas.

Three other contemporary manuscripts, written by Matraki, combine topographic renderings with historical events. In his first work, the **Beyan-i Menazil-i Irakeyn** (Istanbul University Library, T 5964, dated 1537-38), Matraki deals with the Iraqi campaign of Süleyman the Magnificent and accurately documents such cities as Istanbul, Tabriz, Baghdad, Aleppo and Diyarbakir. Matraki's second work, the **Süleymanname** (Topkapı Palace Museum, H 1608) is devoted to the 1543 conquest of Hungary and the Mediterranean campaign of Admiral Barbaros Hayrettin Paşa, while the **Tarikh-i Sultan Bayezid** (Topkapı Palace Museum, R 1272) relates events from the reign of Bayezid II.

The most spectacular work in this genre is the **Süleymanname** (Topkapı Palace Museum, H 1517, dated 1558) whose ninety-six miniatures combine all the characteristic features of the period, and create new elements and compositional schemes. The miniatures, which are the work of several artists, reflect a clear observation of actual personages and buildings, and document the settings and events of the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent, even including such genre episodes as the registration of tribute children for the Janissary Corps.

Another manuscript bearing the same date, the **Futuhât-i Jamila** (Topkapı Palace Museum, H 1592) describes only the Hungarian campaign of Süleyman the Magnificent and gives detailed information on the conquest of each city.

The Classical Period

An extraordinary surge in the painting of miniatures illustrating genealogical, historical, religious, and astronomical manuscripts as well as books on singular events, such as festivals, occurred during the last quarter of the sixteenth century. In this period little attention was devoted to producing literary works. The **Divan-i Selim** (Istanbul University Library, F 1530), an **Anthology** (Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, no. 424) and the **Gulistan** of Sadi (pl. 7) are among the rare examples dating from the late sixteenth century.

The Ottoman **shahname** tradition, relating the personal histories of the Ottoman sultans, became the main concern of painters. Together with archival documents and annals of the empire, these works illuminate the reign of each ruler. Portraiture, initiated at the end of the fifteenth century by Mehmed II, was also revived at this period with the representations of the sultans being incorporated into genealogical volumes. This preoccupation with the history of the Ottoman Empire, the exaltation of the ruling dynasty and the glorification of military victories of the sultans reached its height during the sultanate of Murad III (1574-95).

The number of manuscripts dating from this period is overwhelming. In no other era did the **nakkaşhane** produce so many diverse works nor did the imperial studios employ such an extensive staff of writers, calligraphers, illuminators and painters. Inspired by current events and requested to write on topics glorifying the sultans, the writers used archival materials, documented actual settings and personages, and some even joined the campaigns to bring back first-hand reports.

The painters were faced with the task of creating images demanded by the historians, unique miniatures for which no prototypes existed. The genius of the **nakkaşhane** is evident in the way artists used the given elements to formulate harmonious and aesthetically pleasing compositions. Soon certain themes became standardized, such as the accession ceremonies of the sultans, imperial receptions, marches of the armies through hilly terrains, battles and sieges of fortresses with a profusion of elements portraying the majesty of the empire. Yet a majority of the paintings in a given manuscript had to be individually composed to illustrate the particular episodes chosen from the text.

The clarity of each element in the images enables us to determine the sites and to identify the personages (pl. 8). Careful to record the physical settings of the events with actual architectural and landscape features, and to depict the specific headdresses and garments of the figures, the court painters recreated a faithful image of their times. These illustrated manuscripts are important as social, political and historical documents of Ottoman history as well as outstanding artistic achievements.

The earliest historical work from the classical period is the **Sefer-i Szigetvar** (Topkapı Palace Museum, H 1339, dated 1568-69) which records the last campaign of Süleyman the Magnificent, his death and the first years of the reign of his son, Selim II (1566-74). Selim II's interest in historiography is reflected in the appointment of Lokman as the chief court historian. Lokman created the monumental **shahnames** of Ottoman art using the meter of Firdausi's great epic.

Lokman's first illustrated work is the **History of Sultan Süleyman** (Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, no. 413, completed in 1579), followed by the **Shahname-i Selim Khan** (Topkapı Palace Museum, A 3595, dated 1581) and the two-volume **Shahinshahname** devoted to the reign of the next sultan, Murad III (vol. I in the Istanbul University Library, F 1404, dated 1581; vol II in the Topkapı Palace Museum, B 200, dated 1592-97).

Lokman also wrote the spectacular two-volume **Hünername** (Topkapı Palace Museum, H 1523-25, dated 1584 and 1588). The first part of the manuscript describes the history of the early Turkish dynasties, the Seljuks

and the Ottomans up to Selim I; the second part concentrates on the reign of Süleyman the Magnificent. This manuscript which praises the personality and achievements of each ruler, also presents extremely accurate descriptions of the Topkapi Palace complex.

Another work by Lokman is the **Zubdet al-Tawarikh**, of which three copies exist (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 1321; Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, no. 414; and Istanbul, Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum, no. 1973). Beginning with the creation of the earth, the manuscript represents the general history of the known world up to the reign of Murad III.

Aside from the histories of the sultans, the campaigns of the viziers were also of interest to the court writers and painters. The wars of Lala Mustafa Paşa in Georgia and Azerbaijan are related in the **Nusretname** (London, British Museum, Add. 22011, dated 1582; and Topkapi Palace Museum, H 1365 dated 1584). The **Shajaatname** (Istanbul University Library, T 6043, dated 1586) describes the Persian campaigns of Özdemiroğlu Osman Paşa, and the **Kitab-i Genjine Feth-i Genje** narrates the capture of the city of Genje by Ferhad Paşa (Topkapi Palace Museum, R 1296, dated 1589-90). Singular campaigns such as Selim II's march into Yemen and Tunisia in the **Tarikh-i Feth-i Yemen** (Istanbul University Library, T 6045, dated 1597) were also recorded.

A unique event of the period, the fifty-two day festival arranged by Murad III for the circumcision of his son in 1582, is illustrated in the **Surname-i Hümayun** (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 1344). Over two hundred miniatures describe each episode in the daily program.

An interest in the physical appearance of the reigning sultans can be seen in the numerous portraits of the rulers. **Kiyafet al-Insaniye fi Şemal al-Osmaniye**, a genealogical manuscript written by Lokman, includes twelve representations of the sultans from Osman to Murad III. Two copies of this work (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 1653; and Istanbul University Library, T 6087; both dated 1579) were painted by Osman, an exceptionally prolific artist who developed the scheme of sultan portraits. Osman also supervised the activities of the **nakkashane** and created most of the images in this period.

Another court artist, Nigari, executed representations of Selim II, Süleyman the Magnificent and Barbaros Hayrettin Paşa. Nigari's single portraits of contemporary personages recall the tradition of the past century.

Among other illustrated manuscripts are works on astrology and divination, and religion such as the **Kitab al-Bulhan** (Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, suppl. turc 242; and New York, Pierpont Morgan Library, M 788; both dated 1582) and the six-volume **Siyar-i Nabi** (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 1221-23; New York, Public Library, Spencer Collection, no. 157; and Dublin, Chester Beatty Library, no. 419). The **Siyar-i Nabi** narrating the life of the Prophet with over eight hundred miniatures was begun during the reign of Murad III. The colophon of the last volume, which gives the date 1594-95, indicates that the work was finished under his successor.

The Late Classical Period

The themes seen in the period of Murad III persisted throughout the reign of his son, Mehmed III (1595-1603). However, the crowded compositions with masses of figures placed within a wealth of landscape and archi-

tectural elements tend to become more simplified towards the turn of the century. The settings are more intimate and an interest in genre episodes is noticeable. The portraits of writers and painters are also incorporated into the manuscripts, reflecting the importance of the members of the court studios.

The paintings from the reign of Mehmed III are quite diversified. Above all, the **shahname** tradition continued with Talik-i Zade replacing Lokman as the court historian. Talik-i Zade was the author of three historical works : the first of which, the **Shahname**, depicts the death of Murad III and the accession of his son (Istanbul, Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum, no. 1965); the second, called the **Shahname-i Talik-i Zade** (Topkapi Palace Museum, A 3592), recalls the general histories of the past period, narrating the story of the Turks from the earliest times through the Ottomans; and the third, **Shahname-i Mehmed Khan** (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 1609), is devoted to the reign of his patron, Mehmed III, particularly to the conquest of Erlau in Hungary. It is quite noteworthy that the double-page miniatures of the last manuscript are conceived as large, separate images, folded and inserted into the text; at the end of the book there is a small image which represents the author, calligrapher and the self-portrait of the painter, Hasan.

Other products of the court studios include literary works such as the **Dastan-i Farukh ve Huma** (Istanbul University Library, T 1975, dated 1601) and an anthology comprising sections from the **Baharistan** of Jami (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 1711); books on the peculiarities of nature, the **Marvels of Art and Nature** (London, British Museum, Harlan 5500) and Kazwini's **Ajaib al-Makhlukat** (London, British Museum, Add. 7894); and a thesis on the mysticism of numbers, the **Tercüme-i Miftah Jifr al-Jami** (Topkapi Palace Museum, B 393; and Istanbul University Library, T 6624, dated 1597-98).

A particularly interesting group of manuscripts from this period was produced in the provincial centers and devoted to religious topics with Shiite overtones. From this extremely prolific group we possess several copies of Fuzulis' **Hadikat al-Sueda**, on the life of the Prophet and holy martyrs, whose dates fall between the 1590s and the 1600s (Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Fatih 4321, dated 1594; Turkish and Islamic Arts Museum, no. 1967; New York, Brooklyn Museum, dated 1602; London, British Museum, Or. 12009 and Or. 7301; Paris, Bibliothèque Nationale, turc 1088).

Other manuscripts executed around the turn of the century, revealing the same style include Jami's **Nafahat al-Uns** (devoted to the biographies of famous sufis), Baki's **Diwan**, Lamia Çelebi's **Maktel-i Al-i Resul** (on the martyrdom of Imam Hüseyin), the **Jami al-Siyar** and the **Hümayunname**.

Only one work in this group bears the name of its province, Baghdad, while an entry in the **Menakib-i Sevakip** (Topkapi Palace Museum, R 1479, dated 1558-59), a biography of Jalal al-Din Rumi, suggests that it was made in Konya since its author worked on the manuscript while living in a dervish convent in that city.

This short-lived genre, which co-existed with the court-produced manuscripts, is characterized by figures with large heads drawn almost in caricature, often involved in rather humorous episodes. When compared with the **nakkāṣhane** images, these paintings show a lack of technical perfection, but they are most important because they indicate that centers other than Istanbul were active in the production of manuscripts.

The Seventeenth Century

The themes of the classical period survived to the middle of the seventeenth century. However, little evidence of manuscript production is observable in the second half of the century. One significant feature which appeared during the reign of Ahmed I (1603-17) and which continued up to the nineteenth century, is the compilation of albums. These volumes contain singular miniatures and samples of calligraphy, adorned with beautifully rendered illuminations (pl. 9).

The earliest example is the **Album of Ahmed I** (Topkapi Palace Museum, B 408) which incorporates scenes separated from their original manuscripts, single figures and genre episodes.

Books on fortunetelling which use religious episodes are also seen at this time, such as the oversize **Falname** in Istanbul (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 1702) and a few separate pages in New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art, nos. 50.23.1-2 and 35.64.3). These images, executed in a style which is considerably different from that of the court studio, suggest that they were produced in local workshops employing themes derived from folk traditions (pl. 10).

Only one historical work was produced in the **nakkāṣhane** during the sultanate of Ahmed I, the **Vaka-i Name-i Ali Paşa** (Istanbul, Süleymaniye Library, Halet Efendi 612) in which the Grand Vizier Ali Paşa relates the events of the period.

The brief revival of historical works which occurred under Osman II (1618-22) is exemplified by the biographies of fifty famous men in the **Şekaiyyik-i Numaniye** (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 1263). This manuscript has one image representing Osman II, his Grand Vizier, and the painter, Ahmed Nakşi. Nakşi, a remarkable artist whose style characterizes this period, also executed the miniatures of an anthology called the **Diwan-i Nadiri** (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 819) and the **Shahname-i Nadiri** (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 1124) devoted to the conquest of Hotin by Osman II. The painter utilizes highly individualized figures and attempts to show depth in his scenes by the use of perspective, diminishing elements and receding arches in which tiny shadow-like figures stand in the background.

The last of the great historical manuscripts is the **Paşaname** (London, British Museum, Sloan 3594, ca. 1630) which narrates the activities of Kenan Paşa, the Grand Vizier of Murad IV (1623-40). Following this period album painting will occupy all the energies of the **nakkāṣhane**.

In the latter half of the seventeenth century there was also a revival of the Turkish translations of Firdavsi's **Shahname**. The increase in albums, books on Ottoman costumes and figures, portraits of the sultans, and Firdavsi's work indicate that current histories of the empire were no longer of interest. It is possible that since this century saw major military setbacks,

inapt rulers, and internal and external disturbances, there were hardly any events worth documenting, particularly when compared with the victories of the sixteenth century.

Most of the sultans who reigned during the second half of the seventeenth century preferred to live in Edirne where royal festivals and accession ceremonies often took place. The lack of illustrated material from this period can be partially explained by the destruction of the Edirne palaces and their libraries during the wars of the nineteenth century. Edirne must have been an important cultural center since Levni, the painter who singlehandedly revived the spectacular style of the classical period, was trained in that city.

The Second Classical Period

Following the accession of Ahmed III (1703-30) and the appointment of a most able Grand Vizier, Ibrahim Paşa, there was a brief renaissance in Ottoman painting. The first quarter of the eighteenth century, called the Tulip Period, saw the revival of the themes and elements identified with the classical period. Levni, whose style dominated the studio, created the images of the **Surname** (Topkapi Palace Museum, A 3593), a festival book relating the fifteen-day celebration for the circumcision of the sons of Ahmed III in 1720. The last great illustrated manuscript not only in the Ottoman art but in the Islamic world as well, this work brings back the splendor of the past with the sites and personages of the period clearly represented.

Levni's paintings also appear in a genealogical manuscript containing the portraits of the sultans (Topkapi Palace Museum, A 3109) and in an album composed of various male and female figures (Topkapi Palace Museum, H 2164). His studio executed a second copy of the **Surname** (Topkapi Palace Museum, A 3594), the **Khamse** of Atai (Topkapi Palace Museum, R 816), and several album paintings.

By the middle of the eighteenth century, European-inspired paintings with Western techniques such as shading and perspective incorporated into the style of miniatures became popular. After Levni's death, there were hardly any illustrated manuscripts produced, with the exception of the collections of portraits of the sultans and ambassadors in a debased Western style. The figures in the **Album** of Abdullah Bukhari (Istanbul University Library, T 9364, dated 1735-45) and the unusual **Khubanname ve Zennename** (Istanbul University Library, T 5502, dated 1793) belong to this movement. Panoramic murals decorating the walls of villas and palaces became more and more frequent and by the beginning of the nineteenth century, the tradition of art of the book had completely disappeared.

The painting schools of Europe influenced the Ottoman artists throughout the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. As can also be observed in the art of other nations, traditionalism ceases to exist when painters begin to produce works in such international styles as impressionism, cubism, and abstractionism. Even though local scenes and themes still attract the Turkish artists, their individual styles overshadow any preoccupation with their cultural heritage. The art of painting, having been divorced from the restrictions of the studio and the limitations of book illustration, has entered a new phase in which the personality and creativity of the individual are the dominant factors.

CERAMICS

While Ottoman paintings were executed in the court studios and followed the demands set forth by the sultans, ceramics were used by all levels of society and reveal a more versatile tradition. Produced to supply both domestic and foreign markets, they reflect not only the imperial taste, but also that of the people. The exposure enjoyed by ceramics and tiles both within and without the Ottoman world has led to considerable amount of studies devoted to this tradition. Admired, collected, and imitated virtually from the time they were created, Ottoman ceramics have always been highly esteemed.

Following the Great Seljuk rule in the Near East, a tremendous activity was seen in the manufacture of pottery with the workshops creating an endless variety of new shapes, techniques and decorative themes. The Seljuks of Rum brought these techniques and motifs to Anatolia. Although hardly any pottery remains from the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, the tiles on the existing Anatolian structures give an excellent indication of the quality of the ceramics produced at that time.

The appearance of tiles in Anatolia begins with the Seljuk rule. At first, small pieces of turquoise glazed tiles were incorporated with the brickwork. Then whole domes, iwans, walls, mihrabs, portals and windows were completely covered with mosaic tiles. In time, the colors employed expanded to include blue, green, purple and black as well as turquoise. The motifs in the mosaic panels were either individually prepared or cut out from large slabs of one color. When assembled on the walls, they create exuberant geometric and floral compositions, often integrated with inscribed panels. This difficult and time-consuming technique reached its height in the thirteenth century and continued under the Ottomans through the fifteenth century.

The Konya Palace of Kiliç Arslan II, an extraordinary Seljuk building, possesses both luster and minai tiles together with mosaic panels. The tiles of this palace, which is called the Alaettin Köşk after its restoration by Alaettin Keykubad (1219-37), show a variety of themes including animals and such figural representations as riders and seated rulers. The other palaces of Alaettin Keykubad, the Kubadabad on the shores of the Beyşehir Lake and the Kubadiye near Kayseri, reveal a similar wealth of themes with human figures, fantastic creatures (harpies, sphinxes, dragons and double-headed eagles) and hunt animals (horses, hares, wild goats, lions, tigers and birds).

Although the Seljuk palaces contained tiles with figural and animal compositions, the religious buildings restricted their decorative repertoire to Koranic inscriptions, floral and geometric motifs. The center of tile activity seems to have been Konya, which was also the Seljuk capital, but it is likely that pottery kilns were also set up in other cities to supply the local builders with tiles. The thirteenth-century structures of Konya (Alaettin and Sahip Ata Mosques; Sirçali, Karatay and Ince Minareli Medresses) and of Sivas (Ulu Cami, Gök Medrese and the Hospital of Keykavus) and the mosques, medresses and tombs of Divriği, Kayseri, Aksaray, Tokat, Amasya and Akşehir show the height of mosaic tile decoration achieved by the Seljuks and their followers.

Early Ottoman Ceramics

In the fourteenth century, very few buildings were erected and a stagnation occurred in Anatolian tile production. This stagnation coincides with the disintegration of the power of the Seljuks of Rum and the rise of the small emirates.

A great abundance of folk pottery was produced between the second half of the fourteenth century and the end of the fifteenth. This type of pottery, called the Miletus ware, is characterized by its rough quality and swiftly executed motifs, and was made for local use as well as for foreign markets.

The Iznik excavations have proven that the Miletus ware was executed there, but it may have been made in other Anatolian cities as well.

Although Bursa, and later Edirne, were the capitals of the Ottoman Empire, Iznik was always the center for the production of ceramics and remained so until the eighteenth century. It is possible that there were local kilns in Bursa and Edirne, and definitely in Istanbul and Kütahya, but it was Iznik which supplied the highest quality wares and tiles, conformed to the needs and tastes of the court and influenced the style of the other centers.

The most striking feature of Miletus ware is its red body; the predominant shapes are plates and deep bowls. The entire inner surface and about one-half of the outer reveal a white slip on which the designs were applied with quick brush strokes and then covered with a transparent lead glaze. The motifs are generally drawn in light and dark-blue but purple, green, black and turquoise are also used. On some pieces the final glaze is turquoise or even green or blue.

The decoration, often reserved for the inside of the bowls and plates, consists of geometric interlaces and stars as well as floral designs and occasional birds, either in flight or perched on branches. The decorative program shows an infinite variety experimentation in which no two extant pieces are exactly alike. A great majority of wares have a medallion in the center while the cavetto is decorated with concentric or radiating bands. There are also some examples in which free-flowing designs cover the entire surface. The rims often possess meander-patterns, braids, scrolls or chevrons.

On the border of some plates there is an unusual motif which is reminiscent of the Chinesewave-pattern with spirals and strokes. This border, together with the meander-pattern (called the thunder-pattern in the Far East), occasional cloud collars, lotus leaves and panels, flowers that resemble the chrysanthemum and peony, and scaled backgrounds strongly suggest that the potters had been exposed to blue-and-white Yüan or Ming porcelain. However, only separate motifs support this theory and there is no completely intact example in this group which directly copies a Chinese prototype.

Although the majority of early Ottoman pottery is underglaze painted, other techniques also appear. On some pieces the designs are applied with a white slip and then dipped into blue, green, dark or light-brown glazes. Consequently, the slip-painted motifs show a tone which differs from the background, similar to the technique employed in contemporary Mameluk and Byzantine pottery. Occasionally the slip is enriched by colored clays, in which case the wares are covered by a transparent glaze. Other pieces are painted in black under a turquoise glaze, resembling the method used by the Seljuks.

The Miletus ware, with its red body, slip-painting technique and black motifs under colored glazes, is directly descended from the Seljuk tradition. The underglaze painting, especially the employment of cobalt blue, was an innovation of the fourteen century and one which will lead into the celebrated early blue-and-white wares. Another important aspect in Miletus ware is the predominance of naturalistic motifs with undulating stems, leaves, blossoms and buds which will eventually become the characteristic elements of Turkish pottery.

The fifteenth century, the first great period of Ottoman architecture, witnessed a revival of the use of tiles to decorate the newly constructed imperial structures. Mosaics continued to be the major technique of manufacturing tiles but new colors such as soft green, yellow and white were added to the earlier repertoire of turquoise, blue and purple.

The most important group of buildings from this period is the Green Mosque and Mausoleum in Bursa, built in 1421-24 by Mehmed I. The tile decoration consists of mosaics and gold stencilled turquoise, blue and green hexagons as well as panels with multi-colored glazes, a feature which appears for the first time. With the discovery of this technique the laborious process of making mosaic compositions by assembling small pieces of individually glazed tiles was abandoned. The contours of the motifs are drawn with a black solution and filled in with colored glazes. During firing the outlines rise and prevent the glazes from running into one another. The method resembles the **lakabi** technique of Persia as well as the **cuerda seca** of the West.

Both the **cuerda seca** and mosaic tiles were eventually replaced by polychrome underglazed tiles. The last example of the long tradition of mosaic tiles occurs in the Çinili Köşk of Istanbul, built by Mehmed II in 1472.

Blue-and-White Wares

The influence of Chinese porcelain is quite prominent in the blue-and-white tiles of the fifteenth century. The Mosque of Murad II in Edirne (1433) has over six hundred blue-and-white underglaze painted hexagonal tiles which employ themes derived from Ming wares. Those themes included cloudbands, floral rosettes and clusters of lotus blossoms and peonies amidst grass blades and leaves, often tied at the bottom with ribbons. Blue-and-white tiles also appear in the Tomb of Cem in Bursa. At times turquoise and purple are used in addition to the blue, as can be seen in the Üç Şerefeli Mosque in Edirne (1437-47).

Around 1480-90 the red clay used in Miletus ware was abandoned in favor of a white body which characterizes Ottoman pottery. The quality of this group of blue-and-white wares is exceptionally high: the body is hard and white; the transparent glaze thin, bright and clear; and the decoration reveals themes found both in the **nakkashane** designs and in the collection of Chinese porcelain in the Topkapi Palace. An outstanding feature is a painterly technique using shading in the motifs, making them appear almost three-dimensional. Greatly contrasting with the folk art quality of the Miletus ware, this group reflects the combined talents of the potters and court designers.

A ewer dated 1510 (London, the Godman Collection) and similarly decorated tiles from known buildings, together with the lamps from the Tomb

of Bayezid II, indicate that this style flourished between the 1480s and the 1530s. Hardly any group of Turkish pottery achieves the elegance of shape, the superb rendering of the motifs and the technical perfection found in the blue-and-white lamps, bowls and plates of this period.

The decoration reveals two fairly distinct classes : those which clearly derive their themes from Ming porcelain and others which are based on the motifs created by the **nakkaşhane** with identical designs found on contemporary bookbindings, manuscript illumination, woodwork, metalwork and architectural elements.

One of the favorite Chinese themes employed by Ottoman pottery was three bunches of grapes placed in the center of the plates (pl. 11). The formal arrangement of the plates consisting of a central medallion, cavetto and rim is clearly based on Ming prototypes. The interest in the grape motif continued into the seventeenth century, with several examples showing turquoise included in the color scheme (pl. 13) or even depicting red grapes amidst the blue and green leaves and tendrils. Bunches of grapes also occur on later tiles, often used in combination with cypress trees and floral motifs. Other themes derived from Chinese porcelain, such as wave borders, floral scrolls, lotus petals and panels, already seen on Miletus ware, appear quite distinctly and remain to be the standard motifs used on later polychrome Ottoman ceramics.

The designs of the **nakkaşhane** were often applied to the shapes and decorative programs inspired by Ming wares (pl. 12). These designs are of local origin with identical motifs seen in the sketchbooks of the studio. The pigment used on the pottery was cobalt which ranges from an almost black dark-blue to a soft gray-blue. At times, more than one tone of blue appears on a single piece. Reserved decoration was also employed with the background painted in blue while the main themes stand out in white.

Aside from the prevalent floral and geometric motifs there exist several pieces which show animals (hares, fish, dogs, birds and deer) and figural compositions whose style resembles the paintings from the reign of Bayezid II, a feature which further stresses the strong influence of the **nakkaşhane**.

Recent excavations have proven without doubt that the blue-and-white wares were executed in Iznik, employing the designs sent from Istanbul. Although Iznik was the main center for the production of this type of ware, it was also imitated in other cities. The inscription on the dated Godman ewer mentioned above gives the name of Abraham as its maker and the city of Kütahya as its provenance. The shape and the decoration of the ewer indicate that the kilns of Kütahya were of provincial quality and followed the style and themes of Iznik.

There has been unnecessary debate on the origin of the artists who executed early Ottoman tiles and pottery. The names inscribed on the buildings indicate that the potters were just as heterogeneous as the members of the **nakkaşhane**. The Ottoman world was attracting great quantities of peoples escaping from the unrest in the East and, due to the expansion of the empire, various ethnic groups were being assimilated into the system.

The Green Mosque and Mausoleum in Bursa gives the names of masters from Tabriz as well as those of local potters. It has been suggested that Syrians worked in Bursa and Edirne as Chinese-inspired elements are also found on

blue-and-white tiles on contemporary buildings in Damascus. However, the Syrian examples are considerably inferior in quality and similar motifs had already been utilized by the earlier Miletus wares. Obviously, artists of varied origins were employed in the production of ceramics and their individual talents were absorbed by the general style and taste of the period.

The Transitional Style

The artists who produced early blue-and-white pottery soon began to incorporate other colors into their repertoire. Turquoise, the most frequently seen secondary color, appears on pieces in which the elements reflect a more naturalistic tendency than in the previous period. Vases, ewers and botanically identifiable flora are depicted while few of the themes used on early blue-and-white ware are still retained (pl. 14). Underglaze painted blue and turquoise tiles also exist, mostly hexagonal in shape and adorned with floral motifs.

About the second quarter of the sixteenth century, purple and green which ranges from olive to sage are integrated with the turquoise and varying tones of blue, creating the popularly called Damascus ware. Following the designs of the court, feathery leaves (called **saz** in Turkish) surround clusters of tulips, carnations, hyacinths, roses, pomegranates and lotus blossoms, which are outlined in black or green and depicted on plain or colored grounds (pl. 15).

The only signed and dated piece from this group is a mosque lamp commissioned for the Dome of the Rock in Jerusalem during its restoration by Süleyman the Magnificent (London, British Museum). The inscription gives the date 1549 and the name of its maker, Muslu or Mustafa, as well as the place of origin, Iznik. Similar shards and wasters discovered in the abandoned kilns of Iznik prove that by this date Iznik was well established in the production of lamps, plates and bowls in this style.

Almost contemporary with the Damascus ware is a group whose decoration consists of spirals and blossoms. This motif also appears on the tughras of Süleyman the Magnificent and of Murad III, indicating that once again the design originated in the **nakkashane**. While shards with the same type of decoration were found in Iznik, the inscription on a bottle dated 1529 (London, the Godman Collection) indicates that this same ware was also produced in Kütahya. Called the Golden Horn group due to some fragments discovered there, it is conceivable that this ware could have been made in Istanbul as well. The Golden Horn group often uses black, dark-green and turquoise in addition to the blue.

In the second half of the sixteenth century both the Damascus and Golden Horn styles were gradually abandoned in favor of the polychrome wares, the most renown of all Ottoman ceramics.

The Polychrome Wares

The earliest dated examples of the brilliant red which stands in relief, a unique creation of Ottoman ceramics, are found in the tiles of the Süleymaniye complex built for Süleyman the Magnificent by Sinan (1550-57). The incorporation of emerald-green into the designs also appears about this

time. All the great imperial structures dating from the second half of the sixteenth century are decorated with polychrome tiles which reveal the ingenuity of the Iznik potters. Among these, the most outstanding panels are in the Rüstem Paşa and Sokollu Mehmet Paşa Mosques, the Tombs of Süleyman the Magnificent and that of his wife Hürrem Sultan, and in the Harem of the Topkapı Palace.

The demand for tiles, which resulted from the immense building activities, led to a great diversity of compositions in which motifs are predominantly floral. Arabesques and inscriptions appear amidst a wealth of stems, branches, leaves, buds and blossoms as well as blooming fruit trees, cypresses and vine scrolls.

Structures dating from the first half of the seventeenth century, such as the Mosque of Sultan Ahmed (1609-17), the Baghdad Köşk (1639) and the Circumcision Pavillion (1641) in the Topkapı Palace, continue the great tradition of the past century. Tiles made for residential buildings include a wider repertoire of themes, incorporating animals and birds with the floral elements (pl. 24).

The second half of the sixteenth century produced great quantities of wares which made an abundant use of red in their color scheme. This group was in demand outside the Ottoman world and exported to the Italian states and Greek islands such as Rhodes, where it was once thought to have originated. The wares were also imitated in Europe with copies being made in Italy and England.

The majority of polychrome wares are plates although other shapes such as jars, bottles, ewers, lamps, vases, inkwells, hanging balls, bowls and cups also exist.

The motifs are drawn in black on a clear white ground and painted in blue, green, turquoise and red under a bright transparent glaze. The ground is at times pink, deep-brown, gray or green, while the main designs are reserved in white.

One of the conventional designs was a bouquet of spring flowers growing from a cluster of leaves at the bottom of the plates; the flowers of the bouquets included tulips, carnations, roses, hyacinths, daisies, iris and violets (pl. 21). At times the flowers flank a cypress tree (pl. 18) or a large lotus blossom (pl. 17); some examples show formal divisions with the flora in a central medallion (pl. 19) or cartouches made of half-palmettes and buds placed against a scale or concentric wave-pattern background (pl. 16). There are also architectural representations, boats with full sails (pl. 20), peacocks (pl. 23), birds, fish, animal combats, and male and female figures holding flowers. The extraordinary range of subjects include coat-of-arms and portrait busts commissioned by the Europeans and wares with Christian inscriptions made for the minorities in the empire.

Even though Iznik kilns were the major suppliers of Ottoman ceramics, the workshops of Kütahya were always active as is evident from the inscribed pieces and archival documents.

There are literary evidences which indicate that Istanbul also produced ceramics. One of the sources is Evliya Çelebi's account of the guild of Istanbul potters who paraded in the 1633 festival. Another document, dated around 1640, states that tiles were ordered from the capital for a Transylvanian pal-

ace. Although these accounts are of a later date, there is no reason to disregard the possibility that Istanbul had its own pottery industry throughout the sixteenth century. In fact, one of the miniatures in the **Surname-i Hümayun** of 1582 represents the procession of the Istanbul potters.

Later Ottoman Ceramics

The great tradition of polychrome Ottoman ceramics started to deteriorate in the second half of the seventeenth century. The brilliant glazes of the classical period lost their intensity and the designs declined into a mere repetition of earlier themes, carelessly and monotonously executed.

In the Tulip Period an attempt to restore the ceramics industry was undertaken by Ibrahim Paşa, the Grand Vizier of Sultan Ahmed III. Alarmed that the quality of imperial workshops had progressively degenerated, Ibrahim Paşa moved the Iznik potters to the Tekfur Palace in Istanbul and opened a new tilefactory in 1724. Several eighteenth-century buildings in Istanbul employed the products of this group whose quality could not match the earlier Iznik wares.

After the decline of Iznik and the failure of the Tekfur Palace, the kilns of Kütahya began to rejuvenate and increase their production to supply the needs of the state. Kütahya potters executed blue-and-white wares as well as polychrome tiles and vessels in which yellow and purple were added to the blue, green and red. Characterized by their provincial quality, the motifs on these wares are often sprays of flowers and leaves. Picture tiles with Biblical themes were also produced for the Christian monasteries and churches. Today, Kütahya is an active pottery center continuing its traditional designs as well as reemploying the themes which were prevalent in the sixteenth century.

From the second half of the eighteenth century and through the early decades of the twentieth, an extraordinary group of wares was made in Çanakkale, a region previously unknown for its pottery. Freely sketched with naive charm, the Çanakkale plates depict central rosettes, bunches of flowers springing from vases, abstract splashes and strokes, sailboats, cypresses flanking domed pavilions and mosques, and animals such as giraffes, peacocks and fish. Other vessels show painted floral motifs while a curious group of zoomorphic ewers have relief decorations. There are also ornamental sculptures in the form of human figures or functional objects shaped as roosters, camels and horses. Although some pieces reveal themes taken from late Iznik wares, the majority of Çanakkale pottery is of local tradition and talent. Resembling contemporary Kütahya ceramics in its provincial quality, this group represents yet another tradition in folk pottery which existed towards the end of the Ottoman Empire.

In the present century the kilns of Kütahya and Çanakkale are supported by modern industry. The great workshops of Iznik are known to us only through historical documents, excavation reports and the objects themselves which are preserved in public and private collections throughout the world. Contemporary Turkish ceramics reflect the aesthetics and techniques of the twentieth-century studio potters; they are still in demand as tiled panels in modern buildings and functional or decorative pottery in the home.

CONCLUSION

The great artistic moments of the Ottoman world closely follow the political achievements of the empire. Both the arts and the state progressed through early stages in the fifteenth century and reached their climax in the second half of the sixteenth. The stagnation of the seventeenth century and the deterioration in the eighteenth are observed in the political status of the empire as well as in the arts.

Since Ottoman art by tradition was patronized by the court and under the direct influence of the sultan himself, when guided by energetic and capable rulers, the artists were able to produce the objects of quality demanded from them. From the middle of the fifteenth century through the first half of the seventeenth, the Ottoman world was in the hands of outstanding sultans who were not only concerned with territorial expansion but also with the development of art and architecture.

Founded on the merit system, the Ottoman world gave each individual the opportunity to rise from the humblest origins to the highest posts in the empire, providing the initiative required for personal advancement, regardless of ethnic background. Every subject of the sultan was expected to participate in the growth of the empire and was rewarded accordingly. Ethnic origin was of no consequence as all who lived within the Ottoman empire were given the chance to be an Ottoman.

To be an Ottoman meant unquestioned loyalty to the reigning dynasty and to the system. This unity and fervor directed toward the glorification of the empire was the unshakable force behind the political strength of the Ottoman world and in the creative process of its arts.

Artists of diverse traditions worked together in the **nakkaşhane** and pottery kilns, combining their talents to produce the arts which contributed to the greatness of their world. It was of no importance whether the artists came from Edirne, Tabriz, Belgrade, Naples or Damascus, as long as they considered themselves Ottomans and joined the cultural activities of the state. Their individuality was absorbed by the powerful tradition of the studio which developed those indigenous styles and themes that characterize Ottoman art.

The greatness of Ottoman art lies not only in the fact that the objects possess an admirable technical and aesthetic perfection but also in that they reflect the achievements and aspirations of their periods and help to reconstruct the complete cultural history of the Ottoman world.

CATALOGUE

1 Bookbinding 29.20

Leather stamped with gold

Late 16th - early 17th century

33.9 x 20.5 cm. (13 3/8 x 8 1/8 in.)

The traditional binding of an Islamic book consists of several parts : the front and back covers, the spine, and the flap which is attached with a hinge to the back cover and folds under the front. This flap, seen only in Islamic manuscripts, has its corners cut out and is narrower than the covers. Both the exterior and interior surfaces of the binding are decorated with more attention given to the exterior.

The materials used in bookbindings consist of a pasteboard core, which is made of several sheets of paper glued together, and leather covering the outer and inner surfaces. The areas to be gilded are spread with gold and the decoration is then pressed onto the leather with a mould and a hot plate, leaving the desired motifs in relief within the sunken ground. Finally both the gilt and plain areas are tooled; in some cases the motifs are accentuated by the application of color.

The exterior of this example is covered with deep-red leather. The wide border, corner quadrants enclosing an oval medallion with pendants on its vertical axis are stamped with gold. The borders of the covers and flap, and the cartouches of the hinge show a floral scroll while the other gilt portions are decorated with cloudbands and blossoms.

The interior, in dark - green leather, bears only an oval medallion in the center of each cover and on the flap. These medallions are also stamped with gold and use the same floral scroll seen on the exterior.

The cloudbands, blossoms and floral scroll employed here are frequently encountered in the bindings, illuminated frontispieces and chapter headings, and in the marginal decorations of the sixteenth and seventeenth - century manuscripts.

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

مَالِكِ يَوْمِ الدِّينِ • يَمْزُجْجَعَلِ الْأَرْضَ فِرَاشًا
وَالسَّمَاءَ بِنَاءً • وَأَنْزَلَ مِنَ السَّمَاءِ مَاءً •
فَأَخْرَجَ بِهِ مِنَ الثَّمَرَاتِ • يَمْزُجْ خَلَقَ لَكُمْ
مَّا فِي الْأَرْضِ جَمِيعًا • ثُمَّ اسْتَوَى إِلَى

2 Title Page and First Prayer 37.37

From the Munajat-i Koran-i Sharif

17th century

25.2 x 17.2 cm. (9 7/8 x 6 3/4 in.)

This small volume contains a selection of over one hundred short prayers in Arabic. Its fifty - three folios are written in *naskhi* script using black ink, while the heading of each prayer appears in *thuluth* with silver and gold illuminations. Gold verse - stops are used as well as illuminated corner - pieces. The contemporary binding is of red leather stamped with gold.

The title, *Munajat-i Koran-i Sharif*, or Prayers from the Holy Koran, appears on the illumination of the opening page, followed by the *basmala*. The *basmala*, usually translated as «in the name of Allah, the merciful and compassionate,» is placed after the heading of each prayer. The heading and the *basmala* are either written in silver on gold or in gold on silver. The prayers contain verses taken from various chapters of the Koran.

This volume was most likely used for private meditation as the term *munajat* literally means whispering or imparting secrets, hence inner communication with God.

3 Portrait of a Painter 32.28

ca. 1480

18.8 x 12.7 cm. (7 3/8 x 5 in.)

One of the most significant features of Ottoman painting is portraiture in which the representations of the sultans are incorporated into genealogical manuscripts. Although this genre became fully developed in the last quarter of the sixteenth century, interest in portraiture had begun a century earlier.

Sultan Mehmed II (1451 - 81), the conqueror of Istanbul, had invited Italian portraitists to work in the Palace. During his reign several portraits of the Sultan were executed both by European artists and by Turkish painters who were influenced by Western styles. The *Portrait of a Painter* by a local artist is based on a painting of a scribe made in Istanbul by an European. The artist faithfully copied the model with only minor changes in the details.

The youthful figure wears the garments of the period: a turban and short-sleeved coat over a *kaftan*. He is depicted working on a miniature placed on a pad which rests on his knee. It is very likely that this portrait represents a member of the imperial painting studio.

The seal on the lower left belongs to a former owner and the inscription on the bottom edge, giving the name of Behzad, is a later attribution in no way connected with the portrait.

This miniature is of great importance since its European model is known. The portrait is a representative example from the brief period in early Ottoman painting in which Western styles and themes were introduced into the local traditions. In the ensuing periods, Ottoman miniatures pursued a completely different path, becoming an integral part of the Islamic painting tradition, but retaining their own characteristic style and subject matter.

*Mid - 16th century**18.0 x 13.5 cm. (7 1/8 x 5 3/8 in.)*

Delicate drawings in black ink with various parts of the design accentuated by the application of gold and soft tints began to appear about the middle of the sixteenth century. Often made as single images to be incorporated into albums, these tinted drawings reflect Eastern influences.

The flying *peri*, executed in the Istanbul painting studio, reveals a refined technique with intricate details in the wings, face and clothes of the figure. The crown and garments, as well as the hands and feet, are completely covered with floral scrolls and cloudbands while animals adorn the belt and the shoulders. A long pendant with a medallion of a rider hangs by the hips. Both the stem - cup and the pear - shaped bottle held by the *peri* are decorated. The bottle shows a dragon (*lung*) with a phoenix (*fêng*), well - known portents of auspicious events and symbols of the emperor and empress in China. It should be noted that the shape of the objects as well as the themes on them are of Far Eastern origin, and are often seen in blue - and - white fourteenth - century Chinese ceramics.

The inscription with the name of Shah Kuli at the lower edge of the painting is a later attribution and not an authentic signature of the painter.

In the Topkapi Palace archives Shah Kuli is recorded as having been exiled from Tabriz and having lived in Amasya prior to entering the royal studio in Istanbul. His name appears in the imperial payroll registers of 1520 and 1545, but not in the one dated 1558, which indicates that he was no longer living at the time. From the wages he earned, it is clear that Shah Kuli held the highest post in the studio during these years and was working under Süleyman the Magnificent (1520-66). Other archival documents mention him as presenting various gifts to the Sultan, one of which, dated before 1545, states that he gave an image of a *peri* on paper. These entries and a singular damaged drawing in the Topkapi Palace Museum are all we possess of Shah Kuli's activities in the court.

The stylized wings and ribbons, stiff drapery and overall patterns with rather heavy brushwork suggest that the painting was done by a local artist working in the court, possibly a follower and student of Shah Kuli.

The drawing is enclosed with illuminated bands and corner spanrels on the top; on the reverse there is an unrelated Persian poem which was pasted on the folio during the compilation of the album.

Mid - 16th century

19.3 x 10.8 cm. (7 5/8 x 4 1/4 in.)

Similar in technique and subject to the flying *peri*, this drawing shows a seated angel. It is one of the most refined images of the period. The unusual quality of workmanship is revealed in the delicate shading in the face, the detailed execution in the feathery wings and headdress, and the intricate designs on the garment. The soft flowing treatment indicates a closer contact with Persian models than does the previous painting.

The garments of the *peri* are decorated with a fine floral scroll with lions and gazelles adorning the sleeves and skirt. The collar includes figures riding amidst real and fantastic creatures which include a dragon and a phoenix. In this image the *peri* holds a cup with a low foot while the bottle is identical to the one in the previous drawing.

The problem of identifying the hands of the artists working in the palace studio in this period is far from solved. Some of the artists recorded in the salary registers are mentioned as originating from Tabriz where this particular style flourished. Yet it is difficult to distinguish their works from those of the local painters. The names inscribed on the images cannot be accepted as reliable, since more often than not they are attributions written by later librarians.

One of the Persian masters from Tabriz recorded in the Topkapi Palace archives is Wali Jan whose name appears on many drawings in Istanbul, although only one, a seated *peri*, can be definitely assigned to him. There are a number of angels similar to the style of this example in the Istanbul collections. Wali Jan is last mentioned in a document dated 1596 and was active during the second half of the sixteenth century. He seems to have been an advocate of this genre in the imperial studio and one of his students could have executed the drawing of the kneeling *peri*.

Pasted on the reverse is a Persian stanza consisting of four verses signed by Ali, enclosed with an illuminated border.

اشما

Mid - 16th century

17.5 x 28.5 cm. (6 7/8 x 11 1/4 in.)

This drawing, also tinted and highlighted with gold, depicts a dragon about to swallow a bird while a lion attacks a *ch'i-lin*, a fabulous creature of good omen in Chinese iconography. The combat between real and imaginary animals is enhanced by a scrolling vine bearing oversized blossoms, transforming the dramatic scene into a decorative design. The contorted movement of the animals and the calligraphic use of line are frequently encountered in numerous drawings both in the Topkapi Palace Museum and in other collections.

These drawings often represent ferocious dragons in landscapes, their bodies twisted around rocks and trees, their claws grasping branches. They are either in combat with other animals, in pursuit of prey, or recoiling from an unidentified enemy. The alternate use of thin and thick lines and the addition of gold and pale washes of color are characteristic features of this group. The ink drawing technique and the employment of fantastic animals such as dragons, phoenix and *ch'i-lin* indicate Far Eastern influences.

In this image several different traditions are blended. The theme of an attacking lion is of ancient Near Eastern origin. Similar lions with frontally depicted heads and stylized manes appear on the reliefs at Persepolis which date from the sixth century B.C. Although in Persian iconography, the lion often attacks a bull, a *ch'i-lin* is used here in conjunction with the other Chinese motif, the dragon. The decorative scroll seen beside the Persian and Chinese elements is typically Ottoman with its characteristic long, curving leaves and abstract blossoms. This combination of Far Eastern and Near Eastern elements absorbed into the local tradition is also observed in contemporary ceramics (see, for instance, number 17).

It should be mentioned that in the Islamic repertoire the dragon, the phoenix and the *ch'i-lin* are always in combat, fighting either among themselves or with other animals, and are represented as fearsome beings, both of which are concepts alien to Chinese art.

From the Gulistan of Sadi

Second half of the 16th century

Miniature : 10.7 x 6.3 cm. (4 1/4 x 2 1/2 in.)

The *Gulistan*, or the Rose Garden, was composed by Sadi of Shiraz in 1258 and in time became a favorite subject for illustrated books by both Persian and Ottoman artists. This volume, copied by the Ottoman court calligrapher Rajab bin Khair al-Din, contains one hundred and fifty-three folios with an illuminated frontispiece and two miniatures. The script is in black *nastalik* with blue, red and gold chapter headings. The manuscript has its original binding although the flap is missing.

The first digit of the date in the colophon has been altered, but if the remaining figures are correct, the date can be rendered as 972/1565. This date coincides with the style of the miniatures which belong to the latter part of the sixteenth century and it is possible that they may have been executed sometime after the completion of the text.

One of the miniatures represents the story of the Kadi whose amorous activities had been causing a scandal (Chapter V, Story 19). The Sultan, accompanied by two attendants, who bear his weapons (bow and quiver, and sword), pays an unexpected visit to the Kadi's house in the middle of the night and finds him in a drunken stupor amidst a drinking party. The surprise of the Sultan is expressed by the traditional gesture of bringing a finger to his lips. The books and the great white turban of the Kadi are placed in the niche of the wall. Three musicians playing a lute, a tambourine and a string instrument sit on the carpet in the foreground with wine bottles strewn around. The youthful consort of the Kadi holds a cup in his hand on the right. A burning candle beside him indicates that the episode takes place at night.

The arrangement of the elements in horizontal groupings; particular architectural features such as the arched entrance and tiled walls; postures of the figures and their garments; the color scheme with bright tones, especially the vivid red, are characteristics of the painting style of the second half of the sixteenth century.

This manuscript is one of the rare literary works of this period whose major concern was the illustration of historiographical and genealogical texts.

زاده عیسیٰ عالی مقام
 بی مرید علی داشت نام
 جوان جوانیت با شوق فر
 دلیر و خنک از صاحبش
 پذیره شدش بلای طرف
 دور و نزدیک برین صف
 بدیوان پادشاه آید بار
 نمودند دعوت ز روی قمار

8 Reception at a Desert Encampment 29.75

From an unidentified historical manuscript

ca. 1580

27.1 x 18.8 cm. (10 3/4 x 7 3/8 in.)

During the second half of the sixteenth century an original and indigenously Turkish genre, the documentation of current history, began to appear with numerous illustrated manuscripts devoted to the lives and deeds of individual sultans as well as to specific campaigns undertaken during their reign. This preoccupation with historiography reached its peak in the last quarter of the sixteenth century under Sultan Murad III (1574-95). The texts, written earlier in Persian, the literary language of the period, in time were replaced by Turkish. These manuscripts are of importance not only for their artistic merit but also for the documentation of contemporary figures, events and settings.

The image representing an official reception at a desert camp where the army has halted is from an unknown historical work. The text accompanying the miniature is in Persian and states that the prince, Abd-Ali, a descendant of Ali, was received with full honors by the Paşa. Abd-Ali then hastened to Istanbul where he presented his case to the Grand Vizier and to the Sultan, and was acclaimed as the rightful successor of his father's domains.

The painting shows the Paşa seated under the awning of his tent on the upper left while the members of his court form a circular enclosure in the foreground. In the center of the enclosure Abd-Ali, accompanied by a companion, kneels on a carpet. Other members of the court stand in parallel rows on the right half of the image. The setting of the scene is indicated by palm trees lining the hills on the horizon and by a boat on a strip of water in the foreground.

The rank of each figure can be identified through his costume: high officials wear voluminous *kavuks* and sleeveless coats over their *kaftans*; the Janissaries have hats with a vertical bar on the diadem and flowing white cloth at the back; the Solaks, imperial guards, are shown with feathers on their headdresses; and other special corps of the army are distinguished by split-brimmed hats or feathered turbans.

The stylistic and iconographical features of this miniature reveal that it belongs to the series of historical manuscripts executed around 1580. Two comparable volumes are the *Shahname-i Selim Khan* (Topkapi Palace Museum, A 3593) and the *Shahinshahname* (Istanbul University Library, F 1404), both of which are dated 1581.

9 *Figures by a Brook* 62.32

ca. 1600

8.5 x 6.0 cm. (3 3/8 x 2 3/8 in.)

The scene representing two figures resting by a brook with unrelated Persian verses pasted on the top and bottom of the folio was probably executed for an album. A courtly figure reclines on a cushion, his turban and coat lie beside him. An attendant is removing his shoes. The gold wine bottle and bowl heaped with fruit complete the setting, giving an atmosphere of pleasure and tranquility.

The brook winding amidst hills and trees reveals a rare understanding of perspective with landscape elements decreasing in size as they move into the background. A flowing space is created with the figures forming a part of the entire composition.

Single paintings made for albums became very popular from the beginning of the sixteenth century onwards. Idyllic images, court scenes, genre episodes and single figures representing various types within the Ottoman administrative system were incorporated into volumes with samples of calligraphy. Album making developed into an art form with careful attention given to each page, its borders and margins decorated with fine illuminations.

این راه مرو که هم جاست

راه طلب تو بی شایست

دیگر ز شادمانی عالم نکر و یاد
هر بیدلی که با غم عشق تو خو گرفت

دست من و دست تو خسته

کای یک یک رسد و چو چرخ

10 Abraham Thrown into the Fire 68.8

Early 17th century

19.0 x 23.0 cm. (7 1/2 x 9 1/8 in.)

One particular aspect of album painting was related to divination in which religious subjects were used. Examples of this type of painting can be seen in a number illustrations from the *Falname*, or the Book of Fortunetelling. Although the text of this miniature is not identified, the style suggests that the painting was conceived for such a work.

Abraham, according to the Koran (XXI, Section 5 : 51 - 69), was thrown into the fire after he destroyed the idols, but the fire pit became transformed into «coolness and peace» for him. The miraculously transformed fire pit was often depicted as a verdant meadow by the painters.

On the right half of the image Abraham converses with an angel in the fire pit. The presence of the angel is an unusual detail not commonly encountered in other representations of this episode. Three spectators and a demon stand in front of a catapult on the left while King Nemrud and his queen view the miracle from a window above them. The catapult, although not mentioned in the Koran, appears in some of the popular versions of the story.

The representation of architecture and the garments of the figures resemble the style of fifteenth century paintings. This archaic feature and the addition of elements not usually found in other examples of the story indicate that this work is not connected with the imperial studio. The painting belongs to a popular tradition, like the other *Falname* paintings, which co-existed with the high court style.

A Koranic verse, unrelated to the history of Abraham, is pasted on the back of the illustration.

11 *Plate with Bunches of Grapes* 70.2

Underglaze painted in blue

Early 16th century

8.0 x 39.4 cm. (3 1/8 x 15 1/2 in.)

The influence of Chinese blue - and - white porcelain on early Ottoman wares is a unique feature of Turkish ceramics. The sultans themselves were interested in Far Eastern wares and started acquiring Chinese ceramics as early as the fifteenth century. The imperial collection grew in time to include over eight thousand pieces of Chinese origin, becoming one of the largest in existence outside of China.

One of the themes often seen on fifteenth-century blue - and - white Ming ceramics consists of three bunches of grapes amidst scrolling vines and leaves. This theme appears on early Ottoman plates, the entire compositional arrangement adhering to the Chinese examples. The breakdown of the surface into three zones — central medallion, cavetto and rim — and the decoration employed within these zones are closely related to those used by Chinese potters.

As seen in Chinese pieces, the foliate rim is decorated with the wave-pattern, floral sprays appear in the cavetto while the center has three bunches of grapes with leaves and tendrils. The exterior repeats the design of the cavetto. Although in Chinese plates there is a correspondence between the number of points in the rim, the foliate border around the central medallion, the floral sprays both in the cavetto and on the outside, the Turkish artist has omitted this relationship. In Chinese examples the number twelve is often used, but here there are eight points in the rim and fourteen in the border around the central medallion; thirteen floral sprays appear in the cavetto while only twelve are depicted on the exterior. Moreover, the motifs are considerably stylized and the drawing is not as refined as in the Ming pieces. The wave-pattern seen on the rim of this plate continued to be used in Ottoman ceramics for more than a century even though the decoration and colors changed.

Underglaze painted in blue

ca. 1500

6.5 x 39.3 cm. (2 5/8 x 15 1/2 in.)

The prolific pottery factories of Iznik manufactured different types of ceramics, the earliest of which are the blue - and - white wares executed around the turn of the sixteenth century. In contrast to the motifs of Chinese origin seen in the previous example, this contemporary plate employs a Turkish design.

The wide flaring rim has a white floral scroll against the blue ground; the cavetto is left unadorned, while the central medallion uses the same reserve technique seen on the rim. The exterior bears an elegant floral scroll painted in blue on white, similar in design to the one on the inside rim.

There are less than a dozen extant plates which belong to this group. The blossoms, leaves and cloudbands appearing on these plates are also seen on other decorative arts of the period — in manuscript illuminations, miniatures, bookbindings, arms and armor, woodwork and stucco — indicating that a central design studio created these themes.

13 Plate with Bunches of Grapes 70.25

Underglaze painted in blue and green

Late 16th century

5.9 x 32.5 cm. (2 3/8 x 12 3/4 in.)

The grape motif seen earlier in number 11 persisted until the end of the sixteenth century with modifications both in quality and colors. In this example a plain rim appears with a thin chevron border; the wide cavetto has a floral scroll and the bunches of grapes in the center are highly stylized. The floral scroll of the cavetto is repeated on the exterior.

In addition to the blue, green appears in the blossoms, leaves and tendrils. The naturalistic design has become purely decorative. This transformation is especially noticeable in the use of the green in the loops of the tendrils with a complete disregard of the concept of full and void. At this stage the grape theme, inspired by Chinese porcelain, had become a part of the artistic vocabulary of the Ottoman world and adapted to its taste.

There exist polychrome versions of this motif on the plates with a thick and clear red used in the grapes while the leaves and tendrils are drawn in blue and green. Grapes are also seen on the tiles of the period and are often combined with trees and flowers.

Underglaze painted in two tones of blue

Second quarter of the 16th century

6.8 x 37.6 cm. (2 5/8 x 14 7/8 in.)

A limited group of Iznik pottery painted in underglaze cobalt-blue and turquoise-blue, represents the stage between the earlier blue-and-white wares and the ensuing type which includes manganese-purple.

This plate belongs to that transitional group and is decorated with stylized tulips painted in reserve on the plain rim while eight floral sprays depicted in blue on a white ground appear in the cavetto. The central portion utilizes both techniques; the floral branches of the polylobed arch, central vase and its stand are painted in reserve. The exterior shows a blue floral rinceau.

A local tradition with characteristically Turkish themes makes its appearance in this plate. Flowers such as carnations, tulips and roses seen here became the most prominent motifs on Ottoman ceramics executed after the middle of the 16th century.

The blossoms used in the arch of the center still reflect the style of the earlier pieces as well as the concept of floral sprays in the cavetto and the formal arrangement of the plate into three concentric panels. However, the tendency to represent recognizable flowers, the tabouret under the central vase and the vases themselves point to an intermediary phase which led to the development of the purely floral tradition from the more abstracted early sixteenth-century style.

15 *Plate with Roses, Pomegranates and Hyacinths* 63.7

Underglaze painted in purple and two tones of blue

Second quarter of the 16th century

5.8 x 31.2 cm. (2 1/4 x 12 1/4 in.)

Another type of Iznik ware is distinguished by its floral themes and the use of purple in addition to blue and green. In this example turquoise - blue roses, purple pomegranates and white hyacinth sprays appear on a deep - blue ground. The flowers spring from a cluster at the lower edge of the plate, a feature frequently observed in Iznik wares. The entire inner surface of the plate is taken up by large blossoms and leaves; the division into concentric panels seen earlier has been abolished.

The exterior shows twelve alternating blossoms: stylized roses and sprays of two tulips tied together by a ribbon. This scheme of using alternating blossoms to decorate the exterior of plates was a formula used in later ceramics.

16 *Plate with Central Medallion* 69.1

Underglaze painted in blue, green and red

Mid - 16th century

4.4 x 27.0 cm. (1 3/4 x 10 5/8 in.)

About the middle of the sixteenth century polychrome Turkish pottery appeared in which a bright and thickly applied red was used in combination with various tones of blue and green. This red, which stands in relief, is the most outstanding contribution of Turkish ceramics and the unique creation of Iznik kilns.

An oval floral medallion appears in the center of the plate flanked by pendants and half-palmettes. The motifs are outlined in black and painted in red, blue and green. As seen in previous examples, the white body forms an essential part of the color scheme and design. The main themes are placed against a scale or wave-pattern background, painted in bluish-green. Trefoils decorate the rim while blossoms alternate with scrolls on the reverse. The scaled background continues to appear on plates, bowls and jugs through the seventeenth century.

17 Plate with Floral Design 69.25

Underglaze painted in blue, green and red

Mid - 16th century

6.4 x 31.7 cm. (2 1/2 x 12 1/2 in.)

The foliate rim with the wave - pattern taken from Chinese ceramics continued to be an important element in polychrome Iznik wares. As seen in this example, the wave - pattern eventually became a decorative feature and was so highly stylized that its relation to Far Eastern models is at times difficult to visualize.

Against the white ground a symmetrically composed floral bouquet springs from a cluster at the bottom of the plate. An abstract blossom appears in the center, flanked on either side by an elegantly twisting leaf, a rose bud accompanied by another in full bloom and a spray of blue flowers. The exterior is decorated with six blossoms alternating with the same number of double tulips as seen in number 15.

The drawing on this plate is softer and more sinuous than that seen on the other examples and the decoration reveals a refined sense of color and harmonious arrangement of the elements.

The popular central motif, often called a lotus or artichoke blossom, also appears on contemporary textiles, carpets, manuscripts (as in bookbindings and drawings, numbers 1 and 6), metalwork and architectural decoration.

18 *Plate with Cypress and Roses* 66.25

Underglaze painted in blue, green and red

Mid - 16th century

6.0 x 29.1 cm. (2 3/8 x 11 1/2 in.)

The foliate rim with wave - pattern taken from Chinese ceramics continue to be an important element in polychrome Iznik wares. softly curving and twisting leaves with serrated edges, called *saz*, are typically Turkish.

The colors used on this plate appear in their purest tones : a bright, almost coral red, an emerald - green and a deep cobalt - blue. The exterior, following the traditional vocabulary of the period, depicts blossoms alternating with a pair of tulips.

The preference for symmetry, clearly defined flowers and leaves, bright colors and the insistence on a specific source from which the flora grows are characteristic features of polychrome Iznik plates.

19 *Plate with Floral Medallion* 66.21

Underglaze painted in blue, green and red

Mid - 16th century

6.0 x 33.3 cm. (2 3/8 x 13 1/8 in.)

Although a majority of the plates executed in the second half of the sixteenth century employed the classical type of decoration described previously, there also existed a number of experimental ceramics. This example, which belongs to the experimental group, combines the naturalistic tendency with the more formal division of the surface into contour panels that is associated with the earlier pieces.

The central medallion, enclosed by a cinquefoil border is composed of tulips and roses, serrated leaves and blossoming branches placed against a red ground. The use of red in the background is quite unusual; this color generally appears on the motifs themselves. The wave - pattern on the plain rim has become a convention in Iznik plates by this period. The exterior is also standardized with six blossoms alternating with a floral spray tied by a ribbon.

20 Tankard 68.68

Underglaze painted in green, red and three tones of blue

Late 16th century

Height : 21.0 cm. (8 1/4 in.)

Diameter : 12.0 cm. (4 3/4 in.)

Aside from plates which are the most frequently encountered shapes in Iznik pottery, other forms, such as cups, bowls, jugs, tankards, ewers and long-necked vases, were also produced.

The unusual decoration of this tankard depicts boats with full sails cruising around small islands. Each island has a tower or a castle surrounded by thin and tall cypress trees. An oversized bird which perches in the center of the seascape transforms the scene into a fantastic image. The islands on the rim of the tankard are drawn upside down, possibly to fill the space between the boats. Boldly drawn black lines that outline the curvature of the sails and the contours of the islands help to create a flowing movement.

The blue pigment ranges from a deep cobalt in the castles and birds to a turquoise in the islands and a paler tone, which is almost lavender, in the sails.

The cartographic representation of the scene, with some features seen in bird's-eye view, resembles the style of painting executed during the second quarter of the sixteenth century in which cities and ports were drawn in great detail.

21 Plate with Tulips and Roses 69.26

Underglaze painted in blue, green and red

Late 16th century

6.4 x 30.5 cm. (2 1/2 x 12 in.)

Toward the end of the sixteenth century the wave-pattern that appeared on the rims of plates was replaced by floral sprays. In this example, a bunch of red blossoms alternates with a pair of blue tulips. The same color scheme is used in the center with long stems bearing rosebuds, blooming roses and tulips. The flowers grow from a cluster of leaves placed at the edge of the plate.

The exterior is decorated with alternating single blossoms and double leaves, the stylized form of the tulip motif which has already been noted on previous plates.

Underglaze painted in blue, green and red

Late 16th - early 17th century

19.7 x 14.0 cm. (7 3/4 x 5 1/2 in.)

The brilliance of glazes and refined execution of the elements seen on polychrome pottery of the mid - sixteenth century began to disintegrate in the following century. The decorations tended to repeat the motifs used earlier; the colors, especially the reds, lost their intensity.

The colors on this jug are still vibrant : the deep - blue and bright - green are clear and the red pigment stands in relief. However, the composition is repetitive, relying on the use of horizontal rows of cloudbands, blossoms, as well as overlapping petals and cinquefoils.

Jugs with pear - shaped bodies and curving handles are commonly seen among the works of the Iznik potters.

23 Plate with a Peacock 72.4

Underglaze painted in blue, green and red

Early 17th century

6.0 x 28.1 cm. (2 3/8 x 11 1/8 in.)

Aside from the traditional floral compositions, a few Iznik plates represent sailing boats, pavillions, human figures and animals. A peacock depicted among a profusion of blossoms and leaves is one of the more common themes. This highly ornate animal, a native of the Indian peninsula, was imported to the Near East during the reign of Solomon. The peacock was the favorite bird of Hera in Greek and Roman times and took on a religious meaning in the Byzantine era, being associated with the Resurrection of Christ. In the Islamic world the bird lost its symbolic meaning and was regarded merely as an ornament. The splendid and colorful plumage of the peacock provided a desirable decorative element in the paradise-like gardens and courtyards of the palaces.

In the center of the plate a blue peacock with green wings and tail walks through branches laden with buds and blossoms. On the rim is a scroll with half-palmettes, while the reverse is decorated with four coarse blossoms alternating with three-petalled flowers.

The almost carefree execution suggests that the plate was made to suit popular taste and forms an instructive contrast with the elegant and refined quality of the mid-sixteenth century wares.

24 Tile with Confronting Parrots 66.12

Underglaze painted in blue, green and red

Early 17th century

26.0 x 24.0 cm. (10 1/4 x 9 1/2 in.)

One of the most significant contributions of the Iznik potters was the manufacture of tiles which covered the interiors of religious and secular buildings. Decorated with abundance of flowering plants, long feathery leaves and blossoming trees, these tiles were used to face entire walls, creating a shimmering and opulent quality within the chambers. Although a single tile may appear to be over-crowded with a complex mixture of elements, when employed in large quantities they managed to produce a light and serene atmosphere.

The representation of animals on tiles is somewhat rare. Emerald-green parrots perch on a central fountain surrounded by long and twisting leaves, blossoms, carnations and hyacinths. The white ground sets off the brightly colored motifs and gives a feeling of airiness regardless of the density of the design. Two other fragments with the same theme are in the Benaki Museum in Athens and in the Art Museum of the Ukrainian Academy of Sciences in Kiev. These tiles were probably made for a private villa or pavilion since religious structures were traditionally decorated with only floral motifs, arabesques and inscriptions.

Jade (nephrite), carved and inlaid with gold
16th century
8.4 x 10.0 cm. (3 3/8 x 4 in.)

Jade, known to the mineralogists as jadeite and nephrite, is usually associated with Chinese art where the unbroken tradition of using the mineral in making exquisite ritual and imperial objects extends to the second millenium B.C. The hardness, beauty and durability of jade, obtained from Khotan and Yarkand in eastern Turkestan, made it one of the most desired materials in China.

Jade stones have an extensive range of hues : they can be colorless, white, or various shades of gray, brown, black, blue, yellow, red and green, depending on the presence of other elements. The stones, extremely hard and resistant to steel, must be worked by grinding with abrasive materials.

In the Islamic world, jade was used by the Mughals of India from the fifteen century onward. The mineral was fashioned into jewelry and sumptuous drinking vessels that often were embellished with gold and precious stones. Similarly adorned jade vessels appeared in the Persian and Ottoman courts in the sixteenth century. The mineral used in the Near East in generally white or green nephrite, which was also imported from eastern Turkestan.

Jade objects dating from the Ottoman period are quite limited in number. Mirrors, ewers, cups, bowls and jugs inlaid with gold and gems were created for imperial use in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

The jug on exhibition is of dark-green nephrite, decorated with sunken scrolls filled with gold. On the neck the scroll consists of half-palmettes while on the body there are additional cloudbands, blossoms and knots. The handle, which has a gold chevron pattern, ends in an animal head, possibly representing a dragon.

The shape of the jug is related to contemporary metalwork and ceramics (see number 22). The overall treatment of the surface employing a scroll with similar motifs can be observed in the other arts of the period, in book bindings, manuscript illuminations, ceramics, metalwork, textiles and architectural decoration.

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